

IMPAIRED COLLEAGUES AND PROVIDERS HOD P06-19-14-08 [Amended: HOD P06-03-22-19; Initial: HOD 06-93-25-49]
[Previously Titled: Substance Abuse] [Position]

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) expects its members to address the problems demonstrated by impaired colleagues and providers. Impairment is any physical, psychological, or substance-related disorder that interferes with the ability to engage safely in professional and work activities. Early recognition of impairment is crucial, and when impairment is recognized, immediate action must be taken to protect patients and clients and to assist the provider in obtaining help.

Physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students shall:

- Comply with all institutional policies of the physical therapy service relative to impaired providers and colleagues
- Intervene in a timely manner to ensure that an impaired colleague receives appropriate assistance from a peer assistance/impaired provider program and, if necessary, ceases to provide services
- Report to the appropriate authority, subject to law and consistent with APTA ethical standards, when they have knowledge that a colleague is unable to perform their professional responsibilities with reasonable skill and safety
- Follow licensing board regulations relative to impaired providers
- Support recovering colleagues

Physical, psychological, and substance-related disorders are all treatable. Recovery programs for physical therapy providers and their family members will facilitate the provider's re-entry to full professional and work activities.

APTA encourages chapters to advocate for jurisdictional laws in which entry into the recovery process is confidential and is instituted in a nonpunitive manner. APTA supports the creation of a supportive environment for physical therapy providers in their recovery to enhance the well-being of its members and the profession.

Explanation of Reference Numbers:

HOD P00-00-00-00 stands for House of Delegates/**month**/**year**/**page**/**vote** in the House of Delegates minutes; the "P" indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, HOD P06-17-05-04 means that this position can be found in the June 2017 House of Delegates minutes on Page 5 and that it was Vote 4.

P: Position | S: Standard | G: Guideline | Y: Policy | R: Procedure